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- ART. VI. — 1. *On the Cam. Lectures on the University of Cambridge in England.* By WILLIAM EVERETT, A. M. Cambridge. 1865.
2. *Education in Oxford.* By JAMES E. THOROLD ROGERS, Tooke Professor of Economic Science in King's College, Sometime Public Examiner in Oxford, and one of the Delegates of the Oxford Local Examinations.
3. *The Students' Guide to the University of Cambridge.* Cambridge, England. 1862.
4. *National Review.* Vol. II. *University Reform,— Cambridge.*
5. *Pass and Class.* By MONTAGU BURROWS. Oxford and London. 1861.

THE book of Mr. Everett, whose title we have placed at the head of our article, contains a course of lectures delivered before the Lowell Institute in Boston, in the winter of 1864–65, and gives the reader an account of his experiences as an undergraduate at the English University of Cambridge. It is a pleasant, though a slight performance. Mr. Everett disavows any intention of presenting a thorough treatise on English university education, and has published his lectures much as they were delivered to a popular audience. We are grateful for any account of a personal experience where American personal experience is so rare; but we cannot help regretting that the author did not employ his leisure in recasting his discourses. We could have exchanged his poetry and the two lectures on the great men who have studied at Cambridge, which, though well enough as lyceum lectures, contain little that is new or striking, for a more exact and minute account of the course of study there. In this particular his book is inferior to the only other American book of the kind, the very instructive and entertaining “Five Years at an English University” of Mr. Charles Astor Bristed. We could have wished more particularly for some account of the real working of those measures of reform which have been instituted as the result of the labors of the Parliamentary Commission appointed to investigate the state of the University in 1857, and for something more than what he gives us on the subject of that very important and in-

teresting movement, the Oxford and Cambridge "Middle-Class Examinations." On these and kindred 'academical subjects authentic information is difficult to obtain, and American readers are obliged to rely almost entirely upon such articles as are contained in English periodicals.

We cannot felicitate Mr. Everett upon the style of his performance, and must be permitted to express our wonder that a young gentleman who has had the benefit of the instruction of both English and American Cambridge, should indulge in such flowers of rhetoric as those which adorn his pages. Are we to understand that they were gathered on the banks of the Cam? But it is with precisely such as these that our English brethren are wont to reproach our green and immature scholarship. Yet we feel quite sure that they were never grown under the fostering hand of the accomplished successor of him who, at Harvard, in our young days, so ruthlessly demolished all such ornaments of our juvenile efforts. What, for instance, are we to think of "our matchless Bond, seizing the fiery tresses of the trailing wanderers, and unbridling the oceanic ring of Saturn from the curb the ages had thrown over it"? — proceedings which that worthy and lamented astronomer would have looked on, we think, with some astonishment. Cambridge in the character of an Amazon, on page 126, somewhat alarms us, and we think that our young orator underrated the taste of his Boston audience when he indulged in that peroration to his last lecture about the "Chattanooga of liberty" and "Aurora opening the gates of the morning." This is what we are accustomed to recognize now-a-days as the "spread-eagle style," and to look for from the westward rather than the eastward of our meridian. "When you think any passage in your writing particularly fine, *strike it out*," was the sensible advice of some teacher of rhetoric to a youthful pupil, and Mr. Everett is not yet too old to profit by it.

We must protest, on the other hand, against the slipshod use, in a volume on an academic subject, of the abbreviations *can't*, *would n't*, *must n't*, *did n't*, which are so frequent in Mr. Everett's pages, and to sundry colloquialisms here and there, which contrast awkwardly with his too ambitious rhetoric.

With these drawbacks, however, which the critic is bound to

notice, the book is a pleasant and instructive one,—pleasantest where the author draws most directly from his personal experience, as in the account of the details of his college life, and the picturesque descriptions of the beautiful college buildings of Cambridge. With some of these details we had become familiar in the pages of college novels; others were new and somewhat surprising. We were struck with Mr. Everett's unpleasant account of a college-hall dinner. In our own recollections of the "commons" (long numbered with the things of the past) in old "University," with its brick-floored halls, and primitive benches, we remember no such rudeness at Harvard. We should think it would tell very unfavorably on the table manners of Cambridge graduates. Mr. Everett's remarks on college topics are often sensible and judicious; and we particularly commend the parallel he draws between the gentlemanly reception of college freshmen by the older students at our English sister, and our own brutal, ungentlemanly, and altogether abominable college "hazing." No son of Harvard or Yale can read this without a sense of shame at the contrast, and a feeling that he must do what in him lies to strengthen the hands of the college authorities in suppressing this disgraceful relic of barbarism.

Mr. Everett, as was to be expected from his training, is a warm, though not very discriminating, partisan of classical study. He gives us the usual commonplaces on the subject, but makes no attempt to estimate the real value of the classics in comparison with other subjects of liberal study, or the place the two great English Universities now hold in the English machinery of education. With the help of the other authorities mentioned at the head of our article, we desire to say a few words on these subjects.

Of the complicated university system of Oxford and Cambridge something may be learned from Mr. Everett's first lecture, and more from the work of Professor Thorold Rogers. That system, like most English institutions, has remained outwardly unchanged almost from the time of its foundation, though great internal changes have taken place in its working. Originally the *university* was the educating body, the teaching organ, prescribing a regular curriculum of study, and enfor-

cing its observance with pains and penalties, much in the fashion of our own colleges. But in course of time, and chiefly in consequence of changes of which Laud was the originator, the *colleges* have usurped the place of the university proper, and from an educating, the latter has become merely a prize-giving and degree-conferring body.* This change has led to a total change in the style and manner of instruction, by introducing the fashion of competitive examinations, and the whole system of "honors"; a system which, though supposed by many to be coeval with the founding of the universities, is really of comparatively very recent origin. The first mathematical honor list was published in 1746 or 1747, and the so-called "classical tripos" was not established till 1824. Not only did this system transfer the real teaching from the university professors to the college tutors, but a still further change has been worked by it; for, such has been the eagerness of competition for college honors, and the more substantial prize of a fellowship, that the instruction of private tutors (otherwise "coaches") has to a great degree taken the place of that of the regular college tutors. So that the college study of Oxford and Cambridge has degenerated into little more than a headlong race, a high-pressure system of cramming, for the purpose of gaining some extrinsic object in the shape of a prize or a "living." This would describe the life of the studying (we cannot quite say studious) minority; the majority of the young men at both universities are of that class described by Blackstone, who consider the university a place "to while away the awkward

* "The Professors of Chemistry and Anatomy," says Sir Charles Lyell, in an interesting chapter on University Education in his first Travels in America, "who had formerly considerable classes, have only mustered six or seven pupils, although still compelled to give courses of fifty lectures each. The chairs of Modern History and of the Application of Machinery to the Arts, once numbering audiences of several hundred, have been in like manner deserted." (Vol. I. p. 240.) See the accumulation of evidence in the Report of the Oxford Commission, Evidence, p. 268 *et seq.* "A vast majority of the University," says Mr. Senior, "do not attend the lectures on Experimental Philosophy. Many leave the University *without knowing that such lectures are given.*" On the general subject the reader may consult with profit the learned little work of Professor Malden, "On the Origin of Universities"; the well-known Essay by Sir William Hamilton, "On the State of the English Universities"; and the excellent paper in the National Review whose title we have placed at the head of our article.

interval from childhood to twenty-one, in a calm middle state of mental and moral inactivity."

We do not know how to explain it, save by the thoroughly materialistic turn of thought of our English brethren, their habit of estimating all things by the amount of solid pudding they will bring, that they show such a fondness for this system of competition. Everything in England now-a-days is decided by a "competitive examination." Not a tide-waiter can get a place in the customs, not a young clerk can enter a public office, not a cadet can be sent to India, without first submitting himself to a cramming process, and running a neck-and-neck race with five hundred others, through what is meant to be a literary examination. The preposterous absurdity of some of these is almost incredible,* and the disastrous effects of the system on real learning need hardly be pointed out. Cram takes the place of real study; an extraneous object becomes the motive of exertion, in place of a genuine love of learning; and a body of so-called teachers springs up, whose object is, not to show their pupils how really to learn, but how most cleverly to pass an examination. The memory is overtaxed by feverish efforts,† while all the higher faculties of the mind are held in

* The following are some of the questions set for candidates for a £90 clerkship in the public offices:—1. State concisely Ricardo's theory of rent. 2. What do you consider to be the chief merits and defects, as philosophers, of Aristotle and Plato respectively? 3. Describe the daily life of a citizen of Athens in the time of Pericles, and of Rome in the time of Augustus. 4. What were the distinctive opinions of the old, middle, and new academies? We do not wonder at finding a bluff old Surveyor-General reporting, "Persons who have stood high in the estimation of the Civil Service Commissioners have been found of little value here. . . . They are fond of argumentative displays, and have exhibited towards their principals and the public a degree of presumption and self-sufficiency which could not be tolerated." Our English brethren boast themselves to be peculiarly a *practical* nation, but really the evidences of their practicality are sometimes not a little amusing.

† The transient and worthless character of the knowledge acquired under this high-pressure system (to say nothing of its destructive influence upon the bodily health of the student) has often been pointed out by physiologists and metaphysicians. "The system of *cramming*," says Mr. Bain in his recent work, "The Senses and the Intellect," "is a scheme for making temporary acquisitions, regardless of the endurance of them. Excitable brains, that can command a very great concentration of force upon a subject, will be proportionably impressed for the time being. By drawing upon the strength of the future we are able to fix temporarily a great variety of impressions during the exaltation of cerebral power that the excitement

abeyance. Thus real learning is degraded, and true scholarship is driven from what should be the very home of the Muses. To be forever under the pressure of examinations is not the normal state of the true student, and we cannot but regret to see a tendency in some of our own colleges to substitute the English system for the more laborious but far more thorough one of class teaching.*

That this system has worked an unfortunate change in the style and standard of English scholarship, there is abundant evidence to prove. "However much it may be regretted," says the able writer in the *National Review*, "there can be no sort of doubt that the prospect of obtaining a fellowship is the power by which the whole education of the university is worked." It need hardly be pointed out in how many ways the operation of such a system is injurious. In the first place, it acts very partially. While it stimulates to undue effort a small minority of the best minds, it leaves the great mass of

gives. The occasion past, the brain must lie idle for a corresponding length of time, while a large portion of the excited impressions will gradually perish away. This system is extremely unfavorable to permanent acquisitions; for these the force of the brain should be carefully husbanded and temperately drawn upon. Every period of undue excitement and feverish susceptibility is a time of great waste for the plastic energy of the mind as a whole." (p. 450.) Whatever may be thought of the writer's materialistic philosophy, there can be no doubt of the truth of his practical conclusions. See also the remarks on Memory in Sir Henry Holland's interesting "*Chapters in Mental Physiology*."

* The evidence of Dr. Whewell on this point, the head of the only College in Cambridge where the system is not tolerated, is very emphatic. "I may add," he says, "my very decided opinion, that no system of education which is governed entirely, or even mainly, by examinations occupying short times with long intervening intervals, can ever be otherwise than a bad mental discipline. Intellectual education requires that the mind should be habitually employed in the acquisition of knowledge, with a certain considerable degree of clear insight and independent activity. This is universally promoted by the daily teaching of the lecture-room, with the sympathy and interest that the mutual action of various minds produces; it is not necessarily or greatly promoted by the prospect of an examination. . . . The influence of an English university education would be utterly degraded if examinations and their consequences were to supersede the influence of the college lecture-rooms; or if college lecture-rooms were to make their claim to respect and regard depend solely upon their being the successful rivals of private tutors in preparing students for university examinations." Report of the Cambridge University Commission, Evidence, p. 417. See also a striking passage in Father Newman's "*Office and Work of a University*" (p. 112 *et seq.*), on the deadness and want of all sympathy between teacher and pupil at Oxford in his time.

students entirely unaffected. Hopeless of success, they decline the competition altogether, and drift through their college life in a state of contented ignorance, carrying from their academic halls minds as uncultivated as they brought to them, if they have not meantime been swept away to destruction by the strong current of vice and dissipation. Yet, strange to say, it is from the ignorant, and even from the vicious πολλοί, that the ranks of the clergy of the Church of England are chiefly recruited, by means of the system of presentation to livings. We can no longer wonder at the rejection of Mr. Gladstone as member for Oxford, when we learn that it was chiefly effected by the votes of the country clergy, who are the product of this sort of education.*

The system works unfortunately in another way, inasmuch as it establishes as the leading studies, not those which would be really most useful and improving, but those which will tell best upon a competitive examination. There is a very general impression that the predominance of classical studies at English and American universities has been brought about in consequence of profound investigations into the nature of the human mind and the best methods of training it. Nothing can be more erroneous. Such profound investigations, we are sorry to say, have never been entered into, and educational psychology is a science yet to be created. This predominance of classical study is, we had almost said, an accident; rather let us say, it is the result of well-known events in history, which for a time gave the rediscovered classical writers an altogether exceptional value to the mind of Europe. Their predominant sway has been continued, not through their intrinsic value being greater than that of any other educational instrumentalities, but simply through the force of old prescription, nowhere so strong as in England, and by the influence of the English system upon the founders of our older colleges. To this may be added the reason with which we are more immediately concerned, that such studies, pursued as they are in England, are suited above all others, not to produce real ex-

* The account which Mr. Everett gives (p. 340) of the character and behavior of a large class of English candidates for holy orders is very surprising. We are glad to believe that it has no parallel on this side of the water.

pansion and enlargement of the intellect, but to serve the purposes of a cram examination. Accordingly, we find everything giving place, at Oxford and Cambridge, not even to an enlarged and liberal, but to a narrow and technical study of a few classical writers, and to the unfruitful study of the most useless parts of abstract mathematics. So strong is this influence, and so little considered are any studies save those that bring "marks," and, with marks enough, a fellowship, that the attempt made, in accordance with the recommendations of the University Commission of 1857, to establish natural and moral science "triposes" seems, thus far, to have proved a total failure. The profoundest knowledge of principles avails nothing in an examination when tricks and intellectual *tricks de force* count for so much. Physical science, law, and the philosophy of history necessitate real knowledge, and cannot be broken up into convenient parcels to suit the precise wants of an examiner. And accordingly we find Professor Rogers reporting the average number of first-class men in these "optional schools" at only five or six per annum.

When we speak thus of the failure of university reform, we speak subject to correction. Information respecting it is difficult to obtain; and we know how often it is the case that great changes may be taking place in institutions whose outward framework may give no sign of the internal revolution proceeding within them. We cannot but wish that some one of our academic *friends* across the water—and we are happy to believe that under that term we can include nearly all the best of England's true scholars—would give us more light on the subject. As at present advised, we cannot help believing that classical studies, and those of a very barren kind, and mathematical studies of not much greater value, still retain their mischievous monopoly at both universities.

We say mischievous *monopoly*. We wish to be counted among the friends of true classical learning; but no true friend will wish to see it retain the usurped place it now holds in modern higher education. The argument with which an attempt is made to build up a theory by which Greek and Latin shall forever remain the basis of education, upon their accidental and exceptional importance at the time of the re-

vival of learning, seems to be sufficiently refuted by the manifest failure of the system to meet the wants of a totally different period; yet it is surprising how tenaciously its adherents refuse to recognize the demands of the new times. Mr. Everett, as a young student fresh from his Homer and Thucydides, may be pardoned his fulsome eulogy of classical study, (surely his classics never taught him such rhetoric,) and his slur at men whose arguments and opinions he shows clearly he has never studied. But it is surprising to find in such scholars as Mr. Froude, the historian,* and Mr. Clark, the accomplished editor of Shakespeare,† such a want of apprehension of the absolute necessity in these modern times of widening the curriculum of university study and giving their just rights to modern science. Sneers at the “utilitarianism” of Gower Street come with an ill grace from a scholar, when the London University has become such a power in the English academic world. It is unfortunate that it is so difficult for either party in the controversy to do justice to the merits of the other; that the friends of reform will insist upon attempting to prove classical study worthless, while the adherents of the classics can see nothing in the study of science but an attempt at a “diluted omniscience.” The problem must be approached in a far different spirit before it will receive its true solution.

Happily there are some who do approach it in a different spirit. Dr. Whewell, in a learned and interesting lecture‡ on education, has pointed out clearly “how,” to use his own words, “every great advance in intellectual education has been the effect of some considerable scientific discovery or group of discoveries. Every improvement of the mental discipline of those who stand in the forefront of humanity has followed some signal victory of their leaders; every addition to the means of intellectual culture has been the result of some extraordinary harvest, some more than ordinary bounty of the intellectual soil bestowed on the preceding years.” We should give a very wide meaning to the word “scientific”

* Oxford Essays for 1855.

† Cambridge Essays for 1855.

‡ “On the Influence of the History of Science upon Intellectual Education,” delivered at the Royal Institution in 1854.

in this passage; but unquestionably Dr. Whewell has here laid down an important principle in educational philosophy, this, namely, that every important intellectual revolution must of necessity be accompanied by a corresponding revolution in methods of education. Such a revolution the revival of learning caused by dethroning scholasticism in favor of classical learning. Such a revolution modern physical science is now making, by depriving classical study of its monopoly, and relegating it to its true place, as merely an important branch of the study of philosophy and literature. How it can any longer be maintained that there is some mysterious power in the study of Greek and Latin grammar, not possessed by any similar, or any other studies; how intelligent men can argue as though these were the only studies in which thoroughness is possible, while every other pursuit must be marked by superficiality and sciolism; how any one can maintain that the mere study of classics and mathematics forms a complete mental organon, when the narrowing influence of their exclusive study is patent in the character of so many of their votaries,* — passes our comprehension. It is utterly impossible for the bigoted adherents of classical study to withstand the current of opinion; but it is unfortunate that so many English scholars, whose influence has heretofore been so great in this country, should be so narrow in their views of what constitutes a liberal education. That influence, however, is not likely to be so great as it has been.

It is surprising that the modern advocates of classical studies do not see that what they call classical learning is something entirely different from the classical learning of the period of the revival of letters, and that the latter really approaches much nearer to the system of the advocates of an enlargement of the course of liberal study than to their own. This point has been so admirably brought out by Professor Goldwin Smith,

* On the effect of the omission of the study of inductive science from modern education in leaving so-called educated men a prey to superstition and delusion, see the striking evidence of Dr. Carpenter and Professor Faraday, reprinted from the Report of the Public School Commission, in the Appendix to the recently-published pamphlet of Mr. W. P. Atkinson, entitled "Classical and Scientific Studies, and the Great Schools of England."

in his Lectures on History, that we cannot refrain from quoting the passage.

"The nobility and gentry as a class," says Professor Smith, "seem to have been certainly more highly educated in the period of the late Tudors and the earlier Stuarts than in any other period of our history. Their education was classical; but classical learning meant then, not a gymnastic exercise of the mind in philology, but a deep draught from what was the great and almost the only spring of philosophy, science, history, and poetry at that time. It is not to philological exercises that our earliest Latin grammar exhorts the student, nor is it a mere sharpening of the faculties that it promises as his reward. It calls to the study of the language wherein is contained a great treasure of wisdom and knowledge; and, the student's labor done, wisdom and knowledge were to be his meed. It was to open that treasure, not for the sake of philological niceties or beauties, not to shine as the inventor of a canon, or the emendator of a corrupt passage, that the early scholars undertook the ardent, lifelong, and truly romantic toils which their massy volumes bespeak to our days,—our days which are not degenerate from theirs in labor, but in which the most ardent intellectual labor is directed to a new prize. Besides, Latin was still the language of literary, ecclesiastic, diplomatic, legal, academic Europe; familiarity with it was the first and most indispensable accomplishment, not only of the gentlemen, but of the high-born and royal ladies of the time.* We must take all this into account when we set the claims of classical against those of modern culture, and balance the relative amount of motive power we have to rely on for securing industry in either case. In choosing the subjects of a boy's studies, you may use your own discretion; in choosing the subjects of a man's studies, if you desire any worthy and fruitful effort, you must choose such as the world values, and such as may win the allegiance of a manly mind. It has been said, that six months' study of the language of Schiller and Goethe will now open to the student more high enjoyment than six years' study of the languages of Greece and Rome. It is certain that six months' study of French will now open to the student more of Europe than six years' study of that which was once the European tongue. These are changes in the circumstances and conditions of education which cannot be left out of sight in dealing with the generality of minds. Great discoveries have been made by accident; but it is an accidental discovery, and must

* [It might be added, that so much was Latin considered the vernacular language of scholars and educated persons, that it is not till of late years that a *professorship* of Latin has existed at Oxford. See the Inaugural Lecture of Professor Conington, the present incumbent.]

be noted as such, if the studies which were first pursued as the sole key to wisdom and knowledge, now that they have ceased not only to be the sole, but the best key to wisdom and knowledge, are still the best instruments of education." *

Even if classical studies were the best of all educations for the English aristocracy and clergy, it is clear that, at best, they are but a *class* education, and thus peculiarly unfitted to form the basis of a republican system. And as England advances nearer and nearer to the establishment of republican institutions, the perception of this fact is gradually dethroning Oxford and Cambridge from their old supremacy even in English education. The evidence is clear that they no longer hold the place they once did in popular estimation in England.

"With a population greatly increased," says Professor Thorold Rogers, who is a graduate of, and was for many years a tutor at Oxford,† "and with national wealth almost if not actually doubled, with general and special education still more extensively enlarged within the last twenty years, the number of undergraduates in the universities has absolutely declined within that period, and the sympathies of the nation with its ancient academies have grown weaker and weaker. Men care less and less for academic distinction, know less and less of academic learning, feel less and less the immediate influence of an academic training; and the connection between the universities and the Church bids fair to be the sole remaining link between the country and its noblest corporations. . . . Without the exaction of a degree by the bishops from those who present themselves for holy orders, there would not remain one fifth of the present number of students." ‡

We cannot wonder at this when we read of the deadness, the narrowness, and enormous abuses at these universities. "The school of Law and Modern History," says Professor Rogers, "is a sham, and withal a superficial sham. Scholarship, philosophy, and history are borrowed from French and German authors. Very little has been added to the general stock of human learning out of the vast endowments of uni-

* Lectures on History, I. 21.

† Mr. Rogers in 1862 was elected Professor of Political Economy at Oxford.

‡ See, on the decline of the universities, the remarkable speeches of Mr. Horsman in the House of Commons, and of the late Ex-Chancellor Lyndhurst in the House of Lords, in the debate on University Reform. Hansard's Debates, Vols. for 1854 and 1855.

versity and college income, — endowments equalling the incomes of many states.” The aids and rewards of study at Oxford are estimated at half a million sterling per annum. Some idea of their distribution is given when we read that the Craven Scholarship, the most valuable at the University, by being limited to founder’s kin, has often been held by passmen ; that the Vinerian Scholarships, founded expressly for the promotion of the study of law, “are bestowed without any reference to knowledge of law, or any pledge to study it” ; that at Cambridge King’s College, with a revenue of £25,000 a year, admits annually from *five* to *twelve* undergraduates ; that the noble foundation of All Souls, at Oxford, is a mere burrow for a few indolent, monkish celibates.

But we cannot believe that these magnificent institutions, with all their time-hallowed memories, dear to us as well as to Englishmen, dear to all who speak the English tongue the world over, are destined to decay and perish. The Englishman is no revolutionist, but there is a wonderful power of recuperation, as well as tenacity of life, in English institutions. We cannot believe that University Reform is to be a failure. We rather look to see this odious monopoly of the colleges destroyed, which seems to have crushed the life out of professorial teaching ; to see this disgraceful scramble for mere college prizes and emoluments replaced by a real pursuit of learning. When we remember that in Professors’ chairs at Oxford are now such men as Goldwin Smith, and Jowett, and Müller, and Conington, and Arnold, — at Cambridge, such men as Kingsley and Thompson, — we cannot believe that their teaching can remain barren and unheeded. Surely it cannot but be one of the first wishes in the heart of every American scholar to see these venerable seats of learning in his mother country flourishing in renewed youth, and restored to more than their former glory.*

* The true education of Oxford and Cambridge consists at present not so much in the studies pursued as in the life led there by the better class of students. There is abundant evidence to show that the eager struggle for places and honors, however evil its effects may be otherwise, does not lead to petty jealousies and rivalries ; but that the intercourse of the students with one another is free, generous, and manly. We wish that space allowed us to quote the truly beautiful and eloquent passage in praise of his Alma Mater, with which, after all his sharp criticism, the writer in the *National Review* concludes his article.